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ABSTRACT

A four-stage model was tested to examine the processes by which new faculty became members of three academic departments within a higher education institution. Attention was directed to the ways in which different academic subcultures select and socialize new faculty and the degree to which identity and role orientation are carried over, or adjusted, by new faculty. The four stages of the conceptual model involved: the pre-arrival stage, including the individual's pre-dispositions before entering a new setting; the encounter stage, including an individual's preconceptions formed during recruitment and selection; the adaptation stage, including the external socialization processes and the initiate's identification with the organization; and the commitment stage, including the extent to which the norms and values of the local culture are assimilated by new organization members. Survey and interviews completed by current faculty were used to assess institutional culture, perceptions regarding the subcultures, and the work climate in the three departments. New faculty completed a portion of the survey specifying the relative importance of various academic tasks. The model accurately delineated the process factors involved in the entry period and predicted two enculturation responses. For each stage, theoretical propositions are identified, along with process dimensions and developmental tasks. (Contains 21 references.) (SW)

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The Enculturation of New Faculty in Higher Education: A Comparative Investigation of Three Academic Departments

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Jean Endo
Editor
AIR Forum Publications

ABSTRACT

A four stage model was tested to examine the processes by which new faculty became members of three separate academic departments within an institution of higher education. The study extends recent research on faculty development during organizational entry by analyzing the ways in which different academic subcultures select and socialize new faculty and the degree to which identity and role orientation are carried over, or adjusted, by new faculty. The model delineated accurately the process factors involved in the entry period and it predicted the two enculturation responses proposed before the study began.

While studies on organizational entry have, for several decades, examined how individuals choose organizations and how organizations choose individuals (Lawler, 1973, Vroom, 1966, Wanous 1977), most have focused on the employee recruitment and selection processes primarily from the organization's standpoint. Although the academic profession may provide general identity for faculty, an individual's general value structure and the reciprocal nature of the socialization process have been largely ignored (Van Maanen, 1976). Because there is little disagreement that the academic profession provides general identity for all faculty, the concept of one academic profession has obscured the cultural differences of higher education institutions, the subcultural variations within and among disciplines, and the internalized normative pressures to meet organizational interests which arise as faculty enter new settings. Only recently has socialization been conceived as "cultural learning" in which the values, knowledge, attitudes, skills, and expectations of a particular culture are acquired by initiates (Corcoran & Clark, 1984). At the same time, culture is seen to evolve as it is shaped by the interaction of newcomers and culture bearers (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). While newcomers will integrate, to some extent, their own needs and values with what they perceive to be the institution's norms and values (Bess, 1978), the reciprocal nature of this "cultural learning" process is only now being recognized (Boice & Thomas, 1989; Tierney, 1988).

THE ENCULTURATION MODEL OF ORGANIZATIONAL ENTRY

The study initially developed a four stage model of organizational entry to examine the ways in which different academic disciplinary subcultures selected, socialized, and expressed institutional culture to new faculty, and the degree to which professional identity and role orientation were carried over, or adjusted, during the entry period. The model was drawn from theoretical constructs described in research on faculty development during organizational entry; from sociological studies on socialization and organizational commitment; and from sociological, anthropological and higher education literature on organizational culture and commitment. The four stages related to the

conceptual model presented in Figure 1 include: (1) the pre-arrival stage, dealing primarily with an individual's predispositions prior to entering a new setting; (2) the encounter stage, dealing with an individual's preconceptions formed during recruitment and selection; (3) the adaptation stage, dealing with the external socialization processes and the initiate's identification with the organization; and (4) the commitment stage, dealing with the extent to which the norms and values of the local culture are assimilated by new organization members.

The first stage of the model considers the predisposition of individuals prior to organizational entry, including the professional identity and role orientation acquired during graduate training. The higher education view of professional socialization is that professional identity is acquired through extensive and intensive formal education and that, once acquired, role orientation remains relatively stable over time (Cornwall & Grimes, 1987; Satow, 1975). This suggests that while professionals may be socialized to new roles, in new settings, they bring with them a particular reality in which they expect to function. In comparison, the model, also draws attention to the likelihood of re-socialization; the notion that an individual is responsive to the socializing efforts of an organization.

The encounter stage of the model highlights how individual predispositions intermingle with the ideas and goals a faculty candidate has formulated as a result of the recruitment and selection process. During the hiring process, candidates "select or attend to information in the form of norms or expectations, process this information, and attach meaning to it using their past experience and accomplishments as a frame of reference" (Braskamp, Fowler & Ory, 1984, p. 210). This period of questioning and reappraisal culminates when newcomers have formulated a set of individual preconceptions regarding the reality in which they expect to function. In this perspective, a transitional learning process has already begun which can either support or confuse individuals in their new

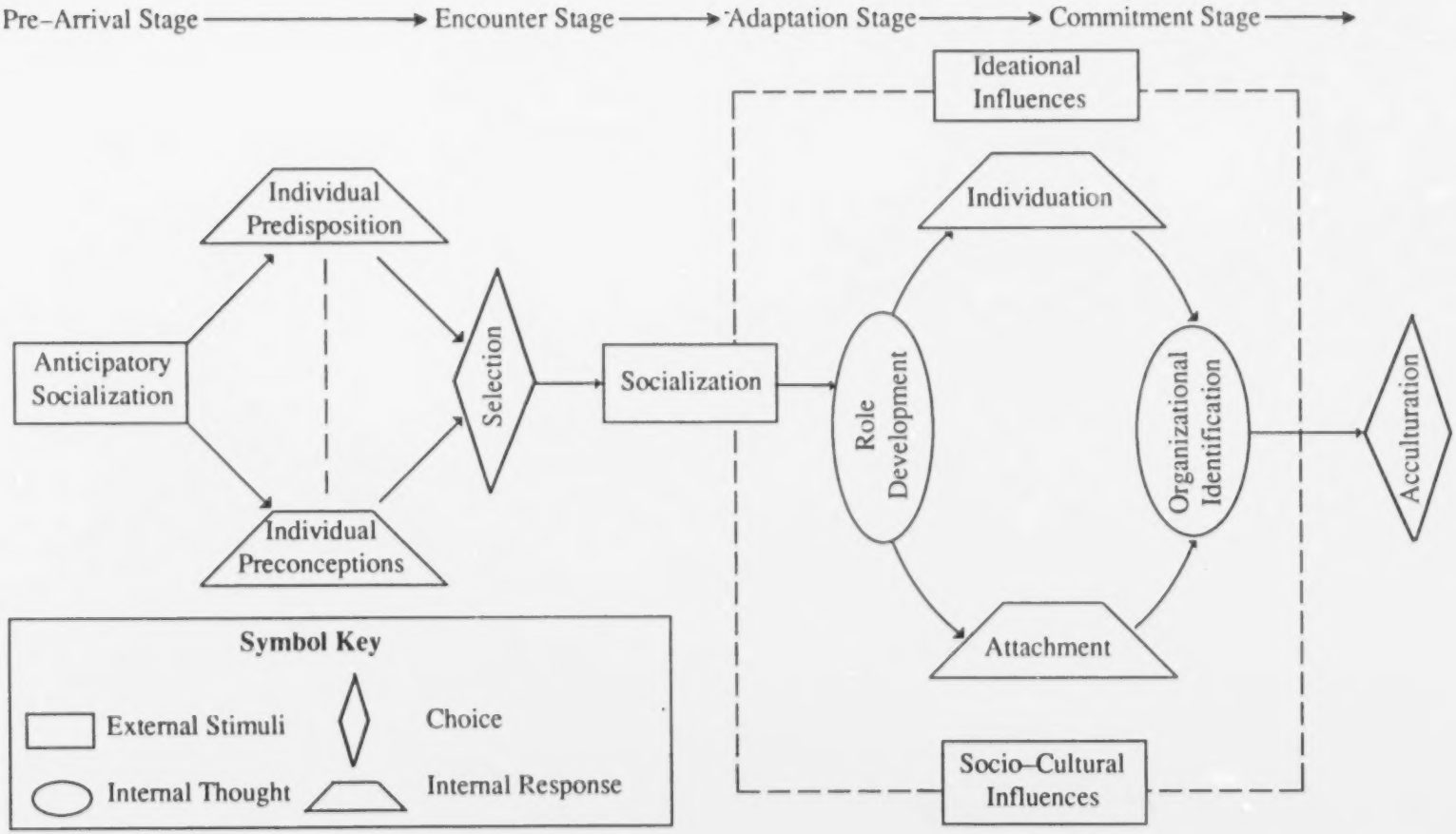

Figure 1: Enculturation Model (Refined)

role as faculty members (Louis, 1980). Cognitive scripts, or expectations, may be formulated to support transitional learning. Such expectations support, or come in contrast with, the experiences which later unfold in the new setting.

The third stage of the model addresses the continual adaptation of new faculty that occurs during organizational entry. While the sociological literature on socialization focuses extensively on the adaptation process (Becker, 1964; Brim, 1966; Louis, 1980; Moore, 1969; Van Maanen, 1976, 1978), the literature on the socialization of academic professionals neglects adaptation beyond the prospective faculty stage (Bess, 1978; Bragg, 1976; Gotlieb, 1961). The subtle differences between graduate school and the workplace setting must be considered if one is to understand how an individual adapts. As contrasts are generated, newcomers may experience a sense of disorientation or foreignness, and a kind of sensory overload described by Hughes (1958) as "reality shock". In this perspective, socialization as an adaptive process can either support or confuse the individual learning a new role (Louis, 1980). So too, colleagues, superiors, subordinates, clients, and other work associates can, and most often do, affect the individual who is adapting. These relationships cause an individual to interpret, or misinterpret the events experienced, and to formulate appropriate, or inappropriate, actions to be taken.

The last stage of the model considers how an individual's level of commitment to the organization is influenced by both personal predispositions and organizational interventions. Organizational commitment can be defined as the affective attachment to the goals and values of an organization, to one's role in relation to these goals and values, and to the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in the organization (Mowady, Porter, & Steers, 1982). An understanding of organizational goals and values coupled with the level of integration of organizational goals with personal goals and values is viewed by researchers as organizational identification (Hall & Schneider, 1972; Lee, 1971). Organizational identification is seen to be affected by practices of

selection and socialization. The notion that selection is a helpful determinant in level of organizational identification suggests that some people are more likely to develop commitment to an organization than other people and that the assessment of values and beliefs should be a part of the recruitment process. With an inappropriate person-organization fit, it would also be logical to assume that socialization efforts would need to be directed not only to the installation of beliefs, but to the eradication of conflicting values. While job satisfaction could help to accomplish a shift in a person's professional identity, or role orientation, the change would be very difficult to accomplish in non-coercive organizations. Thus, the enculturation model assumes that varying levels of identification will occur.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to describe the reciprocal nature of culture in the socialization of new faculty, two sets of subjects participated in the study: current faculty, those termed secondary subjects; and new faculty initiates, those termed primary subjects. All secondary subjects were either institutional administrators or faculty within three academic departments of a Doctoral Granting I institution (Carnegie Classification, 1990). Three academic departments, out of seven involved in the process of recruiting and selecting new faculty, were invited to participate.The three departments were selected because the individuals hired were assuming their first full-time, tenure track position (this was not the case for the remaining four departments). Two of the participating academic departments represented disciplines within the Humanities and one represented a discipline within the Social Sciences. Secondary subjects were either institutional administrators or current faculty within the three participating departments. Three newly hired faculty members, one from each department, agreed to serve as primary subjects.

The research design utilized both quantitative and qualitative techniques. A survey originally developed by DeVries (1970) was adopted and administered to current faculty

to describe their perceptions regarding the institutional culture, the degree of similarity or differences of institutional ideology between subcultures, and the role orientation of current group members in each subculture. Qualitative methods included observation, structured and open-ended interviews, and a log format for new faculty to record their affective and cognitive reactions during the entry period. The log format, and the corresponding new faculty interviews, were of primary importance to the study because these qualitative techniques captured new members' personal points of view about the experiences encountered. In order to describe the enculturation processes as the new faculty became members of the three academic departments, a holistic-inductive research design was selected. Using the constant comparative method of naturalistic inquiry, simultaneous data collection and analysis permitted the enculturation model to be inductively generated, to be tested as data were collected, and to be refined accordingly.

Data Collection

Prior to the first, new faculty interviews, the questionnaire was distributed to all current faculty in the three study departments. The results of the survey were later compared to interview data collected from a subset of the current faculty. Prior to their first week in the department, new faculty were asked also to complete a section of the same survey. This section related to the relative importance of various academic tasks--teaching, research, department administration, university administration, and service. Current faculty survey responses related to the relative importance of these academic tasks were compared to new faculty responses.

The collection of new faculty interview data corresponded to the time frame suggested by the four proposed sequential stages of organizational entry: pre-arrival data were collected before the new faculty entered the setting and encounter data were collected a few days before faculty began their first week of work during the Fall semester. To collect data related to the adaptation and commitment stages, one interview per month

was conducted with each primary subject, beginning with the second week of the Fall semester and continuing through the Spring semester, a nine month period. During that time, primary subjects maintained a log in which affective and cognitive reactions to important elements of their socialization were recorded. By analyzing data collected from the personal logs and interviews, the factors involved throughout the stages of organizational entry became apparent and the explanatory power of the model was tested.

Data Analysis

Data were categorized initially into either content or process dimensions of the enculturation model. Content dimensions related to the institutional culture, the work environment, or department subcultures; and the role orientation of current members. Process dimensions identified the manner in which the three academic disciplinary subcultures selected and socialized new faculty, and the manner in which institutional culture was expressed to new faculty.

Figure 2 illustrates the manner in which sources and types of data were structured to support the underlying questions investigated in each stage of the study. First, current faculty survey and interview data were coded as relating to the institutional culture, to perceptions regarding the subcultures, or to the work climate in the three study departments. These data addressed the question: what are the assumptions, understandings and meanings shared by current group members? In a similar manner, survey data coded as relating to the relative importance of various academic tasks, and to the amount of time spent working on the same academic tasks, addressed the question: what is the role orientation of current organization members?

Process data from the new faculty interviews were then classified into the appropriate stage of organizational entry and data were organized around a set of questions: (a) interview notations related to the pre-arrival stage addressed two questions, what anticipatory socialization experiences does the newcomer bring into the new setting,

Figure 2: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data Category:	**CONTENT**/IDEATIONAL		**PROCESS**/SOCIO-CULTURAL		
Source of Data:	Secondary Subjects	Primary Subjects	Primary Subjects	Primary Subjects	Primary Subjects
Data Type:	Interviews & Document Analysis Survey	Initial Interviews Survey Comparison	Monthly Interviews Observations	Monthly Interviews Personal Logs Observations	Final Interview
Enculturation Stages:	**Pre-Arrival**		**Encounter**	**Adaptation**	**Commitment**
Underlying Questions:	What are the assumptions, understandings and meanings shared by group members?	What anticipatory socialization experiences does the newcomer bring into the new setting?			
	What is the role orientation of current organization members?	What role orientation do newcomers bring to the organization? (predisposition)	What preconceptions are formulated regarding the new setting?	What learning opportunities are provided?	Are new roles acquired? (attachment)
				What relationships are formed?	Are new roles questioned? (individuation)
Theoretical Proposition Tested:	The values acquired during graduate training provide a perspective for interpreting experiences in the new setting.		Existing disposition structures are questioned & cognitive scripts are formed.	As prior experiences are recalled & contrasts are generated, a cultural learning process begins.	The dynamic (enculturation) response occurs.

and to what extent does the role orientation of new faculty vary within and across disciplines; (b) interview notations related to the encounter stage addressed the question, what preconceptions are formulated regarding the new setting; (c) interview notations and log entries related to the adaptation stage addressed the question, in what manner are cultural nuances transmitted to new members; and (d) interview notations related to the commitment stage addressed the question, to what degree are professional identity and role orientation adjusted as one is enculturated?

DATA RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

By tracing the processes by which new faculty became members of three separate academic departments, the explanatory power of the enculturation model was tested and the framework was refined accordingly. Primary theoretical propositions and process dimensions delineated, in the present study, are presented in Figure 3. In this section, within the context of this illustrative framework, the theoretical constructs and process dimensions determined are presented within the four sequential stages of organizational entry. The discussion and interpretation of major findings are interwoven in each section to explain the manner in which theoretical propositions were tested or determined, and to illustrate process dimensions of each stage.

Stage One: Pre-arrival

In the pre-arrival stage, the study investigated whether or not faculty formulated expectations about the institution, based on anticipatory socialization experiences, prior to entering the new setting. Expectations were formulated regarding the new setting based on three interacting factors: the values acquired during graduate training; the role disposition formulated in graduate training; and the differences in the training experiences of each candidate. The professional values acquired, and the role orientation formulated during graduate training, were equally influential throughout the organizational entry

STAGE:	Pre-Arrival	Encounter	Adaptation	Commitment
Theoretical Propositions:	The values acquired during graduate training provide a perspective for interpreting experiences in the new setting.	Existing predispositions are questioned. Preconceptions and performance scripts are formed.	As prior experiences are recalled & contrasts generated, a cultural learning process begins.	The dynamic (enculturation) response occurs.
Process Dimensions identified:	Graduate students formulate role orientation based on an internal response weighing personal beliefs against the role orientations espoused in their graduate school.	Candidates select or attend to information during the hiring process, process this information, using predispositions as a frame of reference, and preconceptions regarding the setting are formed.	Socialization includes formal, informal, and accidental learning opportunities.	As new members encounter realities of the new setting, preconceptions are challenged, and a cognitive or emotional response occurs.
	The values and role disposition formulated during graduate training serve as predispositions in the new setting.	If information encountered during the selection process is not congruent with personal predispostions, the information is unconsciously underwritten to affirm personal satisfaction of job choice; and performance scripts are formulated to reduce uncertainty.	Adaptation is encouraged or inhibited through three dimensions: the work itself, the climate in which work is performed, and the network of social relations surrounding the work.	If an individual's response is aimed at questioning the organization's attempt to alter self-image, individuation occurs.
		An individual's preconceptions either support or cause confusion during the adaptation stage.	New members detect cultural features of the new setting through informal communications and observed conflicts in the work setting.	If an individual's response is aimed at acquiring new self-images, or roles, attachment occurs.
Development Tasks identified:		Forming general impressions of the new setting; defining institutional expectations; and developing performance goals for the first academic appointment year (based on perceived performance expectations).	Defining work role expectations; balancing multiple role demands; prioritizing time; and developing teaching styles and methods.	Re-defining or adopting the role orientation learned in graduate school.

Figure 3 Theoretical and Process Dimensions of the Enculturation Model

period: both were seen as predispositions faculty initiates carried into the new setting. The professional values acquired by the three new faculty members, during graduate training, were similar despite disciplinary affiliation differences. Common values reported included self-motivation and self-reliance; individual autonomy and academic freedom; a profound interest in scholarly activities (in both producing knowledge and in disseminating knowledge); and an appreciation of the intellectual climate surrounding professional work.

The literature describing anticipatory socialization uses the terms professional identity and role orientation interchangeably to describe the values transmitted to students during this graduate training period. Rather than being conceived as a transmission process, the present study suggests that a more complex process occurs: while professional values are acquired during graduate training, role orientation appears to be tentatively formulated. In the present study, while the values adopted during graduate training were characteristically similar, the role orientations adopted by the new faculty were dissimilar. So, too, the new faculty reported that they had not automatically adopted the role orientation espoused in graduate school. Rather, role orientations were formulated as each individual weighed the role orientation espoused in graduate school against personal values. In this manner, the role orientations adopted were distinct. The distinction between acquired professional identity (or values) and tentatively formulated role orientation is an important one because the traditional view of graduate training is that professional identity and role orientation remain relatively stable over time. In the present study, while professional values remained relatively constant, role orientation shifted slightly as faculty assimilated to the new setting.

Stage Two: Encounter

According to the enculturation model, faculty candidates select or attend to information during the hiring period, process this information, and formulate preconceptions regarding the new setting using predispositions (professional values and

role disposition) as a frame of reference. To test this proposition, the study explored the manner in which new faculty formulated preconceptions during the encounter stage. First, from limited information described in the job notice, and from information sent by each department as individuals became job candidates, general impressions of the institution were formed. Then, each candidate focused on information in the form of norms, performance expectations, and descriptions of institutional mission presented by administrators and current faculty during the on-campus interviews. Salient features of the institution emerged differently for each candidate. Which features were attended to, or selected, depended, in part, on the graduate school experiences and predisposition of each candidate. Finally, as this information was processed, the study confirmed that primary subjects established a preconception framework complementing past experiences and individual values-- a framework also consistent with each candidate's role orientation.

Preconceptions were relatively congruent with the predisposition reported for each individual. This suggests that individual preconceptions were unconsciously formulated to reflect the professional values and role disposition of each candidate. This suggests, also, that if cognitive distortions occurred during the interview and selection process-- i.e., if information encountered was not congruent with personal predispositions-- this information may have been unconsciously underwritten to affirm personal satisfaction of job choice and to facilitate individual assimilation. This proposition seems likely given that only positive perceptions of the institution were reported, and the new faculty formulated tangible performance goals, prior to entering the new setting, to reduce uncertainty about performance expectations. The goals formulated were congruent with each individual's predisposition-preconception framework, and their goal statements were consistent with their varying role orientations. Finally, the tangible performance scripts formulated for the first academic appointment year were not necessarily consistent with the actual performance expectations of the three study departments. In summary, during the

encounter stage the study found that new faculty were preoccupied with three developmental tasks: forming general impressions of the work setting, defining institutional expectations, and developing goals for what (they believed) performance expectations would be during the first academic appointment year.

Stage Three: Adaptation

According to the enculturation model, unrealistic impressions, expectations or goals may be formulated about the new setting as a result of the inter-mixing of personal predispositions with preconceptions during the encounter stage. During the adaptation stage, these anticipated expectations and experiences, and the performance scripts new faculty had formulated, were compared to the actual experiences they reported as formal socialization began.

In the present study, the usefulness of the formal opportunities departments employed to socialize new members were suspect in addressing new faculty learning needs. Although these opportunities were perceived as occasions where additional information on departmental operations could be accumulated, the new faculty reported few deliberate supports were provided to assist them. By analyzing the informal processes by which new faculty were able to detect, diagnose and interpret the expectations of the institution and the work environment, three primary socialization dimensions arose: the work itself; the relationship network surrounding the work; and the climate in which work was performed.

While the orientation of new faculty was perceived to be the primary responsibility of the chairperson, across the three departments, the chairpersons' styles were relatively uniform-- new faculty were allowed a great deal of autonomy in adopting to the environment. Thus, direction provided in trying to meet performance expectations was an extremely limited portion of the socialization experience for the three new faculty. Given such limited direction, new faculty drew from their student experiences as they became

immersed in the realities of teaching: imitating, or modeling, the teaching styles of their graduate school mentors; experimenting with teaching methods that had best met their learning needs; and adopting attitudes, values, or performance characteristics they most admired and hoped to impart (e.g., a "love of learning," "enthusiasm for the subject matter," "placing student concerns above all else").

In addition to developing teaching style and methods, other work-related tasks with which the new faculty had to contend, included: defining work role expectations, balancing multiple role demands, and prioritizing time for multiple task performance. Coping with contrasts between personal performance expectations (personal goals and standards), and the reality encountered in performing actual work roles, also occupied a considerable portion of the new faculty's time.

The level of assistance provided in meeting work role requirements, and the level of encouragement provided as work roles were performed, varied considerably among the three study departments. This finding is supported by the perceptions new faculty reported regarding feelings of isolation, acceptance, and inclusion in their home departments. In the study institution, the overarching values-- a respect for individuals, a concern with equity, or fairness in policies and practices; and the historic tradition and concern for teaching-- helped to build a strong and convergent institutional culture. Regardless of the strength of these values, current faculty generally indicated that the future mission of the university was unclear. Given such uncertainty, the study departments found it difficult to manage and to integrate diverse perceptions of the mission-- and to tolerate uncertainty in how various dimensions of faculty work could be appropriately supported, evaluated, and rewarded. Debate over these issues extracted real costs in the functioning of departments, and new faculty socialization was often hindered by these conflicting aspects of the culture. Where conflicts were the strongest, the potential for sharing, supporting, and stimulating an intellectual environment within the department were reduced, and, the

chances of sending mixed messages about performance expectations to new faculty were increased. An unexpected finding of the study was the substantial variability in work climate among the three study departments, and the impact of department climate differences on new faculty. The data suggest that, in the department where work environment, faculty morale, and general climate were rated lowest across the three departments, the primary subject's assimilation experience was the most difficult. Similarly, in the department where the work environment, faculty morale and climate were generally rated the highest, the primary subject experienced the least difficulty in adapting to the new setting.

Stage Four: Commitment

In the enculturation model, as newcomers settle into the routine aspects of work, they begin to focus on establishing their niche, or place in the department; and as a result of this, a cultural learning process begins. How new faculty were able to detect features of the departmental subcultures, and how close their interpretations came to the assumptions and understandings of culture reported by current faculty were considered to test this proposition. First, as the new faculty settled into the second semester, and as they questioned their status in relation to others, conflicts between their preconceptions and the reality encountered in the new setting arose. These cognitive conflicts (ideational influences) heightened the new faculty's sensitivities for exploring, diagnosing and interpreting cultural aspects of their home department.

Second, as they reflected upon experiences they did not expect to encounter in the new setting, they learned about the assumptions, beliefs, and practices of the academic community they had joined. The new faculty reported learning about the culture of their departments through conflicts they observed or heard faculty discuss in informal and formal meetings (socio-cultural influences).

Third, in all three cases, the perceptions of new faculty clearly reflected elements of culture cited previously by current faculty. New faculty detected these cultural features through informal communication, and by observing current faculty as sensitive issues were debated.

Finally, as they began to question preconceptions formulated about the institution, a cognitive or emotional response was triggered in two of the three new faculty. The responses demonstrated that the source of these conflicts differed dramatically, and the timing and intensity of the response varied, from individual to individual. Ultimately, though, the experiences of these new faculty supports the conclusion that dissatisfaction with the work setting does not automatically lead to decreased performance, and satisfaction with the work setting does not necessarily lead to increased performance.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The present study was inspired by Tierney's work on institutional culture, by Van Maanen's general research on socialization, and by higher education studies that shed light on new faculty work role orientations, and the unique experiences of the first academic appointment year (Boice, 1991; Braskamp, Fowler & Ory, 1984; Fink, 1984; Olsen, 1993). In contrast to these works, this study tested the explanatory power of a conceptual model of the enculturation of new faculty. This approach was taken for several reasons. First, the conceptual framework integrates theoretical constructs from disparate research into a more coherent view of the organizational entry process. Second, while organizational theory has separated the complex entry period into three stages-- pre-arrival, encounter, and adaptation-- an intensive review of the literature did not produce research delineating process factors involved in each stage. Studies focused on socialization (the overt or deliberate, formal or informal structure) often overlook the reciprocal cultural learning process (the internal cognitive and affective enculturation response) which occurs as new faculty assimilate to the work setting. In the enculturation

model, a fourth stage of organizational entry was proposed-- the commitment stage-- in which the dynamic enculturation response to socialization occurs. As the model was tested, refinements were made in the commitment stage of the model to descriptively approximate two process dimensions actualized in the study: role development and organization identification. Role development (re-defining, or adopting, the role orientation formulated in graduate school) drew the new faculty's attention in the first half of the adaptation period, and the commitment stage culminated with organizational identification (the level of integration of organization goals and personal goals). Other than these two refinements, the enculturation model accurately predicted the developmental stages and process components reported in the present study. The model suggests that as new faculty continue beyond the first academic appointment year, acculturation will occur. The present study did not trace new faculty development through to this level of assimilation. For studies tracing acculturation beyond the first year, according to the enculturation model, inter-cultural borrowing will occur. This suggests that where the enculturation response was attachment, the faculty member will assimilate and support the norms and values of the local culture; where individuation occurs, the faculty member will assimilate, also, and introduce new norms and values-- resulting in new or blended cultural patterns.

The findings of the study have a broad array of implications for practice. The study suggests a cumulative learning period: individuals build upon, and draw from their graduate training experiences in assuming the role of assistant professor. Given that informal communication encounters were the primary means by which new faculty learned, or misinterpreted performance expectations, departments should frequently and clearly disseminate information about performance standards. In the study, performance standards were vague. The chairperson, in particular, needs to take an active role in providing the communication and teaching support opportunities cited above. An active

support role is significantly different than the passive role chairpersons exercised in this study. In all three departments, the chairpersons assumed that being available, accessible, or open to requests for support from new faculty was a sufficient, unobtrusive support strategy. The paradox is that new faculty may be reluctant to make their needs known, fearing they would be judged as incompetent, and in certain cases, new faculty may not be able to articulate their needs without being prompted to share their adjustment experiences. Given that the chairperson can play an important part in reducing role uncertainty or role ambiguity, and promote general assimilation of newcomers to the work environment and performance requirements, more consideration should be given to delineating formally a chairperson's responsibilities in this regard.

Factors related to climate affect the overall functioning of an academic department, which in turn may affect the assimilation experiences of new faculty. Thus, current faculty might be enlisted to define ways in which the collegial and intellectual climate of their department can be improved. Such a dialogue may lead to identifying consensual norms for performance, and collegial expectations for assisting in the socialization of new faculty. These norms could become important in clarifying performance standards for the first academic appointment year, and in providing newcomers a realistic job preview. The most important implication may be for the new faculty themselves, and for those who help prepare graduate students. It would be beneficial for new faculty to enter an organization with an understanding of the organizational entry period and what they may encounter.

The present study was not intended to cover a broad sample of faculty, nor was it intended solely to test differences in the socialization experiences of new faculty. Rather, the study tested a range of theoretical concepts, and delineated process factors involved in the organizational entry period, to provide a conceptual framework for continued research in this area.

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